
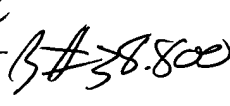


**REMARKS**

Applicants request the Examiner consider the above claims prior to an examination on the merits of the present application. If the Examiner has any questions, he is invited to contact the undersigned to further prosecution.

Respectfully Submitted,

By:   
Joseph M. Potenza  
Registration No. 28,175 

BANNER & WITCOFF, LTD.  
1001 G Street, N.W., 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
(202) 824-3000

Dated: December 16, 2003